

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00  
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 MCT-01 DHA-02 AID-05  
CCO-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 SP-02 OC-06  
OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01  
SS-15 SY-05 SCS-03 FBO-02 CU-02 /081 W  
-----120819Z 033054 /17

O 120720Z APR 77  
FM AMCONSUL KARACHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1596  
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KARACHI 1714

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PK, PINT  
SUBJECT: SECURITY SITUATION IN KARACHI

REF: KARACHI 1702

1. SUMMARY: THE STUDENT-LED HARTAL OF APRIL 11 IN KARACHI WAS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE, THANKS IN LARGE PART TO VIGOROUS, RUTHLESS EFFORTS TO ENFORCE IT. VIOLENCE WAS WIDESPREAD, WITH MANY BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS BURNED OR OTHER WISE DAMAGED. EVEN PRIVATE VEHICLES WERE STONED IN MANY PARTS OF THE CITY. THE VIOLENCE ASSUMED A MORE RANDOM, UNINHIBITED QUALITY THAN HAS BEEN EVIDENT BEFORE. THE PNA ACTION COMMITTEE HAS CALLED ON ALL KARACHIITES TO GO INTO THE STREETS TO PROTEST AT 1600 HOURS APRIL 12. THE LONGER TERM PNA PROGRAM ENVISAGES CONTINUING DESTRUCTION AND ARSO AIMED PARTICULARLY AT BANKS AND PPP-OWNED BUSINESSES. END SUMMARY

2. THE STUDENT-LED HARTAL OF APRIL 11 BECAME PROGRESSIVELY MORE EFFECTIVE AS THE DAY WORE ON,  
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THANKS IN LARGE PART TO THE VIGOROUS EFFORTS OF STUDENTS AND OTHERS TO ENFORCE IT. BY THE END OF THE DAY PUBLIC TRANSPORT WAS AT A STANDSTILL AND VIRTUALLY ALL SHOPS WERE CLOSED. RAILWAY SERVICE WAS TEMPORARILY INTERRUPTED. FACTORIES AND OFFICES THAT HAD ATTEMPTED TO FUNCTION CLOSED EARLY IN MOST CASES.

3. THE USUAL STEPS TO ENFORCE THE HARTAL WERE TAKEN: BARRICADES IN THE STREETS, THREATS TO SHOP OWNERS, THE STONING OF VEHICLES. HOWEVER, THEY WERE APPLIED WITH MORE RUTHLESSNESS THAN IN THE PREVIOUS HARTALS. SOME CITY GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND NUMEROUS BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS, INCLUDING 10 - 20 BANKS, WERE BURNED OR OTHERWISE DAMAGED. EVEN PRIVATE VEHICLES WERE EXTENSIVELY STONED, TWO CONGEN VEHICLES AMONG OTHERS SUFFERING DAMAGE. BUSSES WERE BURNED AND SHOPS WERE LOOTED. THE MOMENTUM OF THE VIOLENCE CONTINUED UNTIL ABOUT MIDNIGHT.

4. FOR THE FIRST TIME DURING THESE RECURRENT TROUBLES IN KARACHI, THERE WAS A RANDOM, UNINHIBITED QUALITY TO THE DESTRUCTIVENESS PRACTICED BY THE PROTESTERS. HAVING DRAWN VARIOUS AFFINITY GROUPS, SUCH AS THE STUDENTS, INTO ITS CAMPAIGN, THE PNA MAY LOSE ITS ERSTWHILE FULL CONTROL OF THE EXTENT AND COURSE OF THE PROTEST MOVEMENT (ALTHOUGH ITS ABILITY TO INSPIRE PROTEST ACTION AND COORDINATE IT ARE STILL IMPRESSIVE.) UNDISCRIMINATING LOOTING OF SHOPS IN SOME AREAS YESTERDAY BY STUDENTS WAS ONE SIGN THAT THIS MAY BE HAPPENING.

5. CLASHES BETWEEN PNA AND PPP SUPPORTERS ARE NOT NEW TO KARACHI, BUT PPP OFFICES AND PPP-OWNED BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS SEEM NOW TO BE MORE CONSPICUOUSLY TARGETED BY THE OPPOSITIONISTS. THIS WAS EVIDENT IN THE PATTERN OF YESTERDAY'S DESTRUCTIVENESS.  
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6. THE SECURITY FORCES WERE HARD PUT TO COPE WITH THE TACTICS OF APRIL 11 BECAUSE THE ACTIVITY WAS SO SCATTERED. DEMONSTRATORS WERE ABLE TO CUT THE DRIGH ROAD ROUTE TO THE AIRPORT TEMPORARILY SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE DAY BEFORE POLICE PATROLS COULD CLEAR THEM AWAY. THE POLICE HAD TO RESORT TO GUNFIRE IN NUMEROUS PLACES DURING THE DAY AND THREE PERSONS ARE OFFICIALLY ADMITTED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED. ALTHOUGH AN ARMY OFFICER IS REPORTED TO HAVE SHOT THREE YOUNGSTERS WHO WERE TAUNTING HIM, IT APPEARS STILL TO BE ARMY POLICY TO LEAVE THE TEARGASSING, LATHI CHARGES AND SHOOTING TO THE POLICE.

7. THE PNA ACTION COMMITTEE FOR KARACHI HAS CALLED FOR ALL KARACHIITES TO GO INTO THE STREETS AND VOICE THEIR PROTEST AT 1600 HOURS APRIL 12. IN THE LIGHT OF YESTERDAY'S EVENTS, A SUBSTANTIAL RESPONSE MUST BE ASSUMED. THE CONSULATE GENERAL WILL THEREFORE CLOSE

EARLY IN THE AFTERNOON AND AMERICANS ARE BEING ADVISED TO BE OFF THE STREETS BY EARLY AFTERNOON. NO AMERICANS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN INJURED YESTERDAY, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SCATTERED REPORTS OF THE STONING OF CARS.

8. A USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE WITH SECURITY FORCES CONNECTIONS STATES THAT THE LONGER TERM PROGRAM OF THE PNA AND ASSOCIATED GROUPS CALLS FOR CONTINUED DESTRUCTIVENESS AND ARSON. PRIMARY TARGETS WILL BE BANKS AND PPP-OWNED BUSINESSES, AS WELL AS RADIO PAKISTAN WHICH THEY HAVE UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO BURN SEVERAL TIMES ALREADY.

9. THE KARACHI STUDENT ACTION COMMITTEE HAS SCHEDULED A MEETING APRIL 12 AT DOW MEDICAL COLLEGE IN DOWNTOWN KARACHI, TO WHICH LABOR LEADERS HAVE ALSO BEEN INVITED, SUGGESTING AN ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE LABOR MORE

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ACTIVELY AND EXPLICITLY IN THE PROTEST MOVEMENT. A STUDENT ACTION COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ORGANIZED IN HYDERABAD AND HAS SCHEDULED A PROCESSION THE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 12.

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## Message Attributes

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